

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-23 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-18 and 24-25 have been canceled. Claims 19 and 22 have been amended. New claim 26 has been added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. ELECTION/RESTRICTION

Applicant hereby cancels nonelected claims 24-25 which were previously withdrawn in response to the prior provisional election with traverse to prosecute the invention of group I, claims 1-23.

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

IA. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112, First Paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claims 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which the Examiner alleges was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Applicant has amended claim 19 as set forth above. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 19 overcomes this rejection. Furthermore, considering that claims 20-21 include all the limitations of claim 19, from which they depend, these claims now also overcome this rejection.

IB. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112 Second Paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claims 19-23 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended claims 19 and 22 as set forth above. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claims 19 and 22 overcome this rejection. Furthermore, considering that claims 20-21 include all the limitations of claim 19, from which they depend, these claims now also overcome this rejection. In addition, considering that claim

23 includes all the limitations of claim 22, from which it depends, this claim now also overcomes this rejection.

III. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4, 6, 8, 12 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Mansky et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,438,497). Applicant has canceled claim 1-18 without prejudice. Applicant respectfully submits that the cancellation of claims 1-18 render the section 102 rejection of claims 1-18 moot.

IV. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Lewis (U.S. Patent No. 6,319,724) in view of Mansky (U.S. Patent No. 6,438,497). Applicant has canceled claim 1-18 without prejudice. Applicant respectfully submits that the cancellation of claims 1-18 render the section 103 rejection of claim 1-18 moot.

V. Claim Amendments

Applicant has amended claim 19, as set forth above to better articulate and thus provide an adequate level of protection for the present invention. In addition, Applicant has added new claim 26 to better articulate and thus provide an adequate level of protection for the present invention. Support for new claim 26 as well amended claim 19 is found on page 11, line 30 to page 12 line 25 of the specification.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

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Amdt. dated October 8, 2003
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If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,

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